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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine whether mentoring relationships developed between teaching interns and public school teachers who were designated as their mentors, what mentoring roles and functions were most characteristic of those relationships, and how much congruence existed between mentors' and interns' perceptions of the mentors' behavior. Data were collected from 17 mentor-intern pairs, who responded to a questionnaire based on eight previously identified characteristic mentor roles: (1) confidant; (2) coach or teacher; (3) positive role model; (4) developer of talent; (5) opener of doors; (6) protector; (7) sponsor; and (8) successful leader. Interns most often reported that their mentors acted as confidants, teachers, role models, and/or opener of doors. They seldom viewed their mentors as developers of talent or successful leaders. Mentors generally thought of themselves as portraying a larger number of the roles and performing more functions than did their interns. Findings of the study are analyzed, and appended tables provide data collected from the questionnaire. (JD)

Intern Mentoring in an Alternative Teacher Preparation Program

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Objectives

The objectives of the study were to determine whether mentoring relationships developed between teaching interns and public school teachers who were designated as their mentors, what mentoring roles and functions were most characteristic of those relationships, and how much congruence existed between interns' and mentors' perceptions of the mentors' behavior.

Theoretical Framework

Zey, (1984) defines a mentor as, "a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring. The mentor may perform any or all of the above ...." (p. 7). Zey also perceives a hierarchy in mentoring with teaching at the lowest level, requiring primarily time; the next level, psychological counseling/personal support, encompasses emotional involvement; organizational intervention and sponsoring, the third and fourth levels, include investment of the mentor's organizational relationships, reputation and career.

Mentoring is being used in many school and school system efforts to improve instruction and also to ease the transition of new teachers into the classrooms. Mentoring has existed in the teaching profession prior to any specific attempts to foster or measure it (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Galvez-Hjornevik,1986; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Krupp, 1985). Gehrke and Kay found that 188 of 300 teachers surveyed indicated there had been someone other than a family member "who had taken a personal interest in their careers and had helped, guided or sponsored them" (p. 21) during some time period in their careers or preparation. Fagan and Walter found that 76% of the teachers in their study reported having received some type of mentoring when they first started teaching and that having a mentor was significantly related to job

satisfaction. Reciprocal mentoring relationships occurred much less frequently (about 18% of the time) between student teachers and their cooperating teachers, according to Soroka, Mahlios, and Stahlhut (1986).

Schein (1978) listed several varieties of mentoring roles which he thought were clearly distinguishable: 1. mentor, coach, or trainer; 2. positive role model; 3. developer of talent; 4. opener of doors; 5. protector (mother hen); 6. sponsor; and 7. successful leader. Schein's roles have been used in research on mentors in teaching (Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Soroka, Mahlios, & Stahlhut, 1986), although mentor and coach were listed as separate roles and trainer was not included, producing a list of eight roles.

One of the recommendations regarding mentoring relationships is that they are usually entered into voluntarily by both parties (Kram, 1985). Some government agencies and private industries have organized formal mentoring programs, however, which have been in existence for some time and have been relatively successful (Phillips-Jones, 1983). Little research has been done to determine the extent to which mentoring relationships can develop in circumstances such as those in which the student teacher, intern, or beginning teacher is "assigned" to an experienced teacher, or the factors to be considered when making such assignments. Gray and Gray (1985) report a pilot study which indicated that having the same ideologies about teaching, discipline, and classroom management may be important in developing successful relationships between beginning and experienced teachers in assigned pairs. Teaching in the same part of the school, thus facilitation interaction, and teaching the same subject or grade level may also be helpful (Gray & Gray, 1985; Huffman & Leak, 1986). Having time for formal and informal conferences, planning and conversation, having the same planning period, and the mentee's understanding and accepting of the need for a mentor may also be conducive to development of a successful mentor relationship.

There has been less systematic research on identifying the functions of the school teacher mentor than on the roles of the mentor. Huffman and Leak (1986) found that informal conversation was ranked as most beneficial in developing mentor relationships. Fagan and Walter (1982) found that teachers who reported having a mentor when they first began teaching reported the following functions as characteristic of the mentors: helped them gain self confidence (74%), listened to their ideas and encouraged creativity (67%), gave them a better understanding of school administration (51%), helped them learn technical aspects of teaching (40%), and taught them how to work with people (17%). Soroka, Mahlios, and Stahlhut (1986) produced multiple examples of mentor behaviors which could be categorized under the eight roles of Schein.

An alternative program for selected graduate students leading to teacher certification in secondary teaching areas which was initiated in 1985-86 at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville (the Lyndhurst Fellowship Program) includes an intensive summer instructional program, followed by a year-long public school internship during which the intern teaches three courses and assumes other responsibilites of a fully certified teacher while completing seminars and coursework. Applicants for the program must have already completed a college degree at the undergraduate level and meet state minimum requirements for certification in a secondary level teaching area. The public school teacher (mentor), to whom the intern is assigned for the internship, is responsible for the usual tasks associated with student teaching supervision but is also expected to facilitate assimilation of the intern into the school, system, and profession. Mentors are selected and assigned to interns by the school systems from among teachers in the same subject areas as the interns, but their classrooms are not necessarily in close proximity to those of the interns.

Method

Interns and their public school mentors were asked to complete questionnaires at the conclusion of the year-long internship in May of 1986 as part of the program and internship evaluation. The questionnaiures investigated the mentoring roles and functions of the mentors as perceived by the interns and the mentors.

Instrumentation

Questionnaires containing parallel items regarding the quality of the intern-mentor relationship, change in the relationship, role(s) and function(s) of the mentor were developed for interns and mentors. Interns and mentors were asked to indicate how well they got along with each other on a five-point scale with responses ranging from from not at all (1) to very well (5) and were asked if their relationship had changed during the internship.

Interns were asked which of Schein's eight mentor roles were characteristic of their public school mentors. They were then asked to check each of 18 mentoring functions drawn from the literature (Collins, 1983; Fagan & Walter, 1982; Inana, 1983; Soroka, Mahlios, & Stahlhut, 1986; and Woodlands Group, 1980) that their public school mentor had performed during the internship. Public school mentors were presented with same lists of roles and functions and asked to indicate all which were characteristic of their behavior with respect to their intern.

Subjects

All 19 interns and their mentors were asked to complete questionnaires at the conclusion of the year-long internship. Questionnaires were completed by 18 interns and 18 mentors. The number of intern-mentor pairs from whom data were available was 17, and data from these respondents formed the basis for this study.

Ten of the interns and 11 of the mentors were female (see Table 1). Ten intern-mentor pairs were same-sex combinations, with seven of them consisting of female interns and female mentors. Mentors were usually older than the interns and had an average of 15 years of teaching experience (range 2-29 years). Average age of the interns was 32 years (range 21-45).

Only one intern rated the relationship as very poor (1); one intern and one mentor (not the same pair) rated the relationship as all right (3). All other interns and mentors reported that they got along either well (4) or very well (5). Eight intern-mentor pairs agreed their relationship had not changed during the year, three agreed that it had changed, and the remaining six pairs disagreed.

Analysis

The percentages of interns and mentors indicating each role and function were characteristic of the mentor were determined. The percentage of pairs in which each of the roles and functions was a source of agreement as being present in the behavior of the mentor, being absent, a source of disagreement, and overall congruence were calculated. The number of roles and functions marked by interns and mentors was also tabulated

Overall role/function congruence was calculated by comparing responses of the intern and public school mentor within pairs. When both intern and mentor reported that the mentor had portrayed a particular role or function, it was listed as agree-present (AP). When both did not check beside a role, indicating that both recognized that the mentor had not fulfilled that role, it was also considered an agreement but was listed as agree-absent (AA). When one person (either intern or mentor) reported that a role was characteristic of a mentor but the other person did not check that role, it was categorized as a disagreement (D). Overall role congruence (OC) was defined as the per-

centage of pairs in which both individuals agreed that a role was either present or absent. The same procedures were applied to each of the functions.

Results

Interns most often reported that their mentors acted as confidants, teachers, role models, and/or openers of doors (see Table 2). They seldom viewed their mentors as developers of talent or successful leaders. Mentors also most often thought they acted as confidants. Almost as frequently, however, they thought themselves to be role models. Teacher and successful leader were the next most frequently indicated roles ascribed to mentors by themselves. Protector was the role adopted by the fewest mentors.

Role-present congruence was greatest for the role of confidant, with 65% of the pairs agreeing that it was present, while the role with the highest level of agreement that it was absent was that of developer of talent (53%). The highest level of overall role congruence (role present agreements + role absent agreements) was for the roles of confidant and opener of doors (82% each). The highest rate of disagreement was in regard to the role of role model (47%), followed closely by the roles of protector and successful leader (41% each). Ten of the 17 interns (59%) listed three or more of the eight roles as characteristic of their mentors (see Table 3). Mentors perceived themselves as performing slightly more roles than did the interns.

All interns and all but one mentor reported that the mentors believed in the interns and their abilities (f) (see Table 4). Other mentoring functions which were characteristic of the largest numbers of mentors as reported by the interns included the following: gives the intern information about the organization, channels and procedures (h); shares personal information (g); and gives both positive and negative feedback (c). All mentors reported that they listen to interns' ideas (j). All but one mentor reported that they support the intern when talking to others (b), give both positive and negative feed-

back (c), and give information about the organization, channels and procedures (h).

Few interns reported that their mentors told them about job openings (p). Only a small number of mentors reported they did activities with intern outside of the time spent at school (d). Few interns or mentors reported that the mentor gave the intern advice on combining work and family life (o), or introduced the intern to important people in the profession (l). Mentors generally listed more functions they thought they performed than did their interns (see Table 5). Almost all of the interns and all of the mentors identified multiple functions as being performed by the mentor.

Discussion

Throughout this discussion of the results of the study, it is important to note that the small size of the group (17 pairs) is a serious limitation. Statistical tests were not conducted, and generalizeability should be undertaken cautiously because of the small size of the group and the rather unusual situation (a year-long internship in a public school in which the intern teaches three classes and assumes other professional responsibilities), which differs from the both traditional student-teaching and also from an initial year as a certified teacher.

One of the important findings of this study is that prescribed mentor relationships, those in which the mentor is assigned to the intern rather than being selected voluntarily and subject to mutual agreement, can become relationships in which the individuals get along well or very well. This occurred in almost all cases. In addition, the mentors did perform roles and functions generally ascribed to mentors.

Schein's mentor roles appear to be applicable to the intern-mentor teacher relationship, but there may be some question regarding the practice of considering only those persons who fulfill three or more of the roles as

mentors, the criteria used by Gehrke and Kay (1984). In only two of the 17 pairs did the interns indicate that the mentors had not portrayed any of the eight roles. While only a little over half of the interns indicated that their assigned mentors had performed in three or more of the mentor roles, all but two interns reported that they got along well or very well with their mentors. In addition, only two interns indicated that their mentors did not serve multiple mentoring functions. The intern who rated the mentor relationship as very poor checked none of the roles or the functions; the intern whose relationship was rated all right checked only one role (role model) and two functions (believes in me and my abilities, and listens to my ideas). This may raise a question regarding the validity of not considering as mentors those who fulfill only one or two of Schein's roles, because several of the interns had good relationships with their mentors, who performed several of the mentor functions. There may also be a need to further examine the relationship of the mentoring functions used in this study to the mentoring roles.

One of the most characteristic and most consistently recognized mentor roles in the relationships of teachers and interns was that of confidant. This was also the role most frequently identified by Gehrke and Kay (1984). Another role with an equally high degree of overall role congruence (82%) was that of opener of doors. There was a high level of agreement between interns and mentors that these roles were either present or absent. The role of role model appears less clearly recognized, as only 53% of the intern-mentor pairs agreed that it was either present or absent in the behavior of the mentor.

Successful leader is perhaps the least applicable of Schein's roles to teacher mentors. It was identified by only 24% of the interns in the current study as being present and was not selected by any of the teachers in the Gehrke and Kay study. Mentoring, as used in this study, was designed to aid in the induction of prospective teachers into the profession. It was based on

the premise that experienced teachers could provide assistance to novices in much the same manner that mentors function in business and industry. In business, however, there tends to be a hierarchy among employees. In education, advancement is limited to a small number of positions, such as department head or administrator (supervisor, assistant principal, principal), so that leadership shown by a someone at the teacher level may seldom be recognized. Additional qualifications are usually required for advancement to administrative levels. Pay increments are generally based on teaching experience and education, not on performance, so that there is little that a mentor could do to help a beginning teacher in terms of this type of advancement. The mentor's role in education may serve the primary purpose of making the novice's job easier, rather than increasing the novice's opportunitites for recognition or advancement

Belief in the intern and providing information about the organization were the two functions most clearly recognized as being either present or absent. Fewer than half of the intern-mentor pairs, however, agreed on whether or not the mentor had told the intern about job openings, which should be easily identified as a behavior on the part of the mentor, or encouraged the intern in the profession outside of the classroom. The highest level of agreement among interns and mentors was that the mentor did not do activities with the intern outside of the time spent at school. While this may occur in mentor relationships in other contexts, it is not likely to occur between teaching interns and their mentors, perhaps because the interns have not completed certification requirements and are yet fully been accepted

Giving the intern information about the organization, channels, and procedures was more typical of intern-mentor relationships than beginning teacher-mentor relationships. It was perceived as a mentor function by 82% of the interns, but only 51% of the mentors of beginning teachers performed a

similar function (Fagan & Walter, 1982). Findings were more representative of those of Fagan and Walter with respect to two other functions, however. Beginning teachers reported that the mentors frequently helped them develop self confidence (74% as compared with 65% of the interns in the present study) and listed to their ideas (67% compared with 59% reported by the interns).

Another function highly characteristic of mentors in the present study was that the mentor took a special interest in the intern's career (perceived by 71% of the interns). This was the description of a mentor used by Gehrke and Kay (1984) by which they determined that 63% of the teachers surveyed had had a mentor.

Lack of role and function congruence may indicate a need for clearer definition of the roles and functions so that they are perceived similarly by interns and mentors. Mentors generally thought of themselves as portraying a larger number of the roles and performing more functions than did their interns. If the role and function definitions cannot be clarified to the point that both parties share common perceptions and can recognize their presence or absence, data from only one party becomes suspect and may be a function of subjective judgment rather than actual behavior of the mentor.

Importance of the Study

It appears that a mentoring relationship can develop when an intern is assigned to an experienced teacher. This should lend support to the induction activities which focus on assigning beginning teachers to experienced teachers who are expected to function as mentors. Some mentoring roles and functions were more common to mentors than others, and some roles appear to be more clearly distinguished by interns and mentors as being either present or absent in the behavioral repertoire of the mentor.

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Table 1

Characteristics of Intern-Mentor Pairs

Characteristics	Gender Combinations of Intern-Mentor Pairs			
	F-F[a]	F-M[a]	M-F[a]	M-M[a]
Number of pairs	7	3	4	3
Mentor Age in Relation to Intern:				
About the same	3	0	0	0
Older				
0-5 years	0	0	1	0
6-10 years	0	2	1	1
11-15 years	4	1	0	0
16-20 years	0	0	0	1
20+ years	0	0	0	1
Younger				
6-10 years	0	0	2	0
How well intern and mentor get along as rated by Intern:				
Very Well	5	2	2	3
Well	0	1	2	0
All Right	1	0	0	0
Poorly	0	0	0	0
Very Poorly	1	0	0	0
How well intern and mentor get along as rated by Mentor:				
Very Well	5	3	2	3
Well	2	0	2	0
All Right	1	0	0	0
Poorly	0	0	0	0
Very Poorly	0	0	0	0

Note. N = 17 interns and their mentors

[a]Gender of Intern-Gender of Mentor

Table 2

Presence of Mentor Roles as Perceived by Interns and Mentors

Role		I	M	AP	AA	D	OC
a.	Confidant	71%	76%	65%	18%	18%	82%
b.	Teacher (of the intern)	53%	53%	35%	29%	35%	65%
c.	Sponsor	35%	47%	24%	41%	35%	65%
d.	Role model	47%	71%	35%	18%	47%	53%
e.	Developer of talent	24%	41%	18%	53%	29%	71%
f.	Protector	41%	24%	12%	47%	41%	59%
g.	Opener of doors	47%	41%	35%	47%	18%	82%
h.	Successful leader	24%	53%	18%	41%	41%	59%

Note. N = 17 intern-mentor pairs.

Note. I = checked by intern; M = checked by mentor; AP = agree present; AA = agree absent; D = disagree; OC = overall congruence (intern and mentor agree that role was present or absent).

Table 3

Number of Mentor Roles Perceived by Interns and Mentors

Number of Roles	Interns	Mentors	Agree Present	Agree Absent
None	2	0	2	2
One	2	2	5	4
Two	3	2	2	2
Three	2	2	3	3
Four	4	3	2	1
Five	0	4	3	3
Six	2	2	0	0
Seven	0	2	0	2
Eight	2	0	0	0

Note. N = 17 intern-mentor pairs.

Note. $\bar{x}$ = 3.4 roles perceived by interns, $\bar{x}$ = 4.1 roles perceived by mentors.

Table 4

Presence of Mentor Functions as Perceived by Interns and Mentors

Function	I	M	AP	AA	D	OC
a. Take a special interest in intern's career	71%	76%	58%	24%	18%	82%
b. Support intern when talking to others	71%	94%	65%	12%	24%	76%
c. Give intern both positive and negative feedback	76%	94%	59%	0%	41%	59%
d. Do activities with intern outside of the time spent at school	29%	24%	12%	59%	29%	71%
e. Encourage intern in the profession outside of the classroom	35%	76%	24%	18%	59%	41%
f. Believe in intern and intern's abilities	100%	94%	82%	6%	12%	88%
g. Share personal information with intern	76%	76%	53%	18%	35%	71%
h. Give intern information about the organization, channels and procedures	82%	94%	76%	12%	12%	88%
i. Give intern information about individuals within the organization	41%	53%	24%	29%	47%	53%
j. Listen to intern's ideas	59%	100%	53%	0%	47%	53%
k. Help intern develop self confidence	65%	82%	59%	18%	24%	76%
l. Introduce intern to important people in the profession	24%	47%	12%	41%	47%	53%
m. Have high standards or expectations of intern	53%	82%	47%	12%	41%	59%
n. Give intern information about the informal communication networks in the school and/or system	71%	88%	59%	6%	35%	65%
o. Give intern advice on combining work and family life	24%	29%	6%	53%	41%	59%
p. Tell intern about job openings	18%	76%	18%	29%	53%	47%
q. Recommend intern for positions in the school system where the intern is doing internship	53%	76%	47%	12%	41%	59%
r. Recommend intern for positions in other systems	59%	71%	41%	24%	35%	65%

Note. N = 17 intern-mentor pairs.

Note. I = checked by intern; M = checked by mentor; AP = agree present; AA = agree absent; D = disagree; OC = overall congruence (intern and mentor agree that role was present or absent).

Table 5

Number of Mentor Functions Perceived by Interns and Mentors

Number of Functions Recognized as Present	Interns	Mentors
None	1	0
One	1	0
Two	1	0
Three	0	1
Four	1	1
Five	0	0
Six	1	1
Seven	2	0
Eight	0	0
Nine	1	1
Ten	0	0
Eleven	1	0
Twelve	2	2
Thirteen	2	1
Fourteen	0	2
Fifteen	1	3
Sixteen	1	1
Seventeen	2	3
Eighteen	0	1

Note. $\bar{x}$ = 9.5 for interns, $\bar{x}$ = 12.8 for mentors.